UNITY

The Unitarian MONTHLY

AN ORGAN OF REASONABLE RELIGION

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves!" Tennyson

FAITH
FREEDOM
FELLOWSHIP

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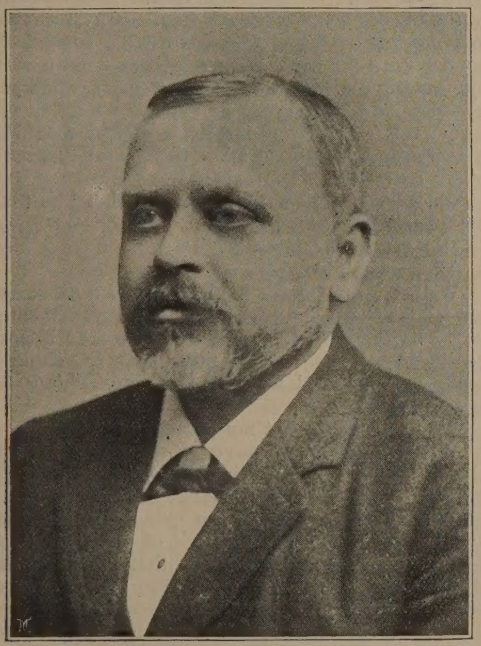

Mr. HENRY MARSDEN, J.P.

(Chairman, First Circuit, Manchester).

Born Langcliffe, near Settle, Yorks., 1842; removed to Manchester at age of 14 years; commenced business on his own account in 1865; ultimately entered the wholesale clothing trade and succeeded in building up a flourishing business under good conditions for his employees. In religion he was Wesleyan up to 1872, when he heard a lecture given by the late Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., in Cross Street Chapel, and a course of six more lectures, which so changed his views that he joined the Unitarians at Upper Brook Street Free Church. He has been treasurer for this church many years, and is most highly esteemed and trusted by his fellow-members. Mr. Marsden is Chairman of the new First Circuit of Manchester, which includes the four churches of Upper Brook Street, Higher Broughton, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, and Urmston. In public life he has also pursued an active and honourable career in politics and social service; he has been member of the Lifeboat Saturday Committee, Poor Law Guardian, member of the Manchester and Salford District Education Committee, and a City Councillor for Manchester, and is Treasurer Police Aided Association for Clothing Destitute Children. He has four sons and one daughter, one son being a successful physician in Manchester, and another is an Ph.D. of Heideberg and managing chemist in a large Yorkshire industry. An earnest Unitarian, he is untiring in his devotion to the church of his adopted faith; to such loyal adherents as he is, our churches owe more than they know. With the religious rationalism of Unitarianism he combines the fervent spirit of his early Methodism, and believes in the promotion of true missionary enterprise for the propagation of the free and progressive Faith. May our churches long be blessed with a succession of such men!

Varieties.

They only the victory win
Who have fought the good fight and have vanquished
The demon that tempts us within;
Who have held to their faith unseduced by the prize
That the world holds on high;
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist, fight,—
If need be, to die. —W. W. Story.

Do something in the name of your faith, and you will be surprised to find how much faith you have. Our message should be our chief business, for if we see to the gospel the gospel will see to the coming of the Kingdom. —S. A. Eliot, D.D.

ANNIVERSARY EVENTS: Jan. 2nd, Emancipation of Slaves in U.S.A.; Jan. 23rd, Foundation of the Brahmo Somaj; Jan. 30th, Execution of Charles I.; Feb. 6th, the death of Joseph Priestley.

A Glad New Year.

A glad new year for you,
And happy be thy days;
May all professing friends be true;
And straight and bright thy ways!

A glad year for the young;
Their hearts with sunshine fill,
And lead their feet the flowers among,
To sweeten thought and will.

A glad year for the old,
Who bravely patient, wait;
To them the kindest things be told,
To open Heaven's gate.

A glad year for the Truth!
Its message speed along;
Its holy work tho' rough, or smooth,
Must overcome all wrong.

A glad new year for Love;
May men to men draw near,
In kind accord their spirits move;
And all strife disappear.

A glad year for our Church!
Made rich in noble deeds,
By young and old in loving search
To fill the spirit's needs.

—H. B. S.

"Poor Human Nature."

By the Author of "Randal's Principle," Etc.

CHAPTER I.

It was New Year's Day, and almost everybody was wishing everybody else "A Happy New Year."

Two men were walking along the street in opposite directions. As they proceeded they met each other. One of them came along with a slouching gait as if he saw nothing or no one; he was not very clean, and somewhat ragged in his attire; he looked the scape-grace he was. The other man was fairly well-dressed, sleek and respectable-looking. On ordinary days no doubt these two would have passed each other without word or look. But the better looking man accosted the other and said:

"A Happy New Year to you!"

The sloucher looked up, stopped, and opened his eyes wide as if in utter astonishment.

"A Happy New Year to me?" said he, "Why should you say that to me of all people, and you, too?" And then he burst out into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

"Whatever are you laughing at?" asked the other, somewhat taken aback. "Is there any wrong in a good wish? Ought we not to wish it for everybody to-day?"

"To-day!—why to-day? Why not every day? And what a joke that—you—should wish it—me. People call me 'Depravity Joe,' don't they? And they say I'm good for nothing. And you are a local preacher, you are. And last Sunday you stood up in the pulpit, and you said that human nature is vile, and that such as I am cannot be saved, and that the curse of God is upon us. So what do you mean by wishing ME a happy year if you know that God has condemned me to be unhappy? Why, you are going against God."

Now "Depravity Joe" said this in a heated manner very much of a contrast with the explosion of laughter that preceded. And the local preacher seemed a bit staggered.

"Well, I thought it was only kind to wish you a good wish."

"Oh, you did, did you?" said Joe. "Then, you are kinder than God? You say God has cursed me, when you are in the pulpit, and when you meet me in the street—on New Year's day, mark you—then you bless me. Now if I deserve God's curse I do not deserve your good wish; and if you mean what you say in the pulpit you cannot mean what you say when you wish me to be happy."

Now this manner of putting it almost took Mr. Silas Sinker's breath away. He held up both his hands reprovingly, and said:

"Oh, Joe, I am sorry you've received it like that, but I meant well."

"Did you really mean it?"

"Yes, I did, of course."

"Well, if you did, I thank you Mr. Sinker, but how about God's curse? Is it any use you wishing me to be happy if God will not let me be happy? Don't you see, Mr. Sinker, either your preaching is wrong or your good wishes are wrong. P'r'aps it's the preaching."

"Who told you about my preaching?"

"Who told me? It's a young woman as I know who goes to your chapel sometimes."

"Why don't you come, Joe?"

"Why don't I? What, with preaching like that? Awful encouraging for the likes of me, isn't it, to hear that my heart is vile, and that I am not one of the elect, and that I am certain to be sent to hell, eh? Poor human nature!"

At this Joe looked the sleek man up and down with an air as if he thought he saw this very "Poor human nature" in the person of Mr. Sinker.

(To be continued).

A Baptist Church at Denver, Colerado, U.S.A., voted on November 5th to retain its name of Baptist, but to join the Unitarian body.

The cause established at Biddulph by the Unitarian Minister of Congleton, the Rev. F. Hall, is now in possession of a meeting-room on a three years' lease.

The new Congregation at Ilford is erecting a schoolroom on newly-acquired land, near its church building.

Over 20,000 copies of Dr. Carpenter's "First Three Gospels," sixpenny edition, have been disposed of, and an equal number of Armstrong's "God and the Soul."

A New Year's Greeting.

By A. D. TYSSEN, D.C.L.

We appeal to all people to try to lead good lives, to try to learn and do what is right in the sight of God. If any persons unfortunately do not believe in the existence of God, then we appeal to them to try to learn and do what would be right in the sight of a Supreme Being of perfect goodness, supposing such a Being to exist. If they do so, we believe that they will be justified in the sight of God as well as those who do believe in His existence. At the same time we would wish, if it were possible, to awaken them to have faith in God, for we believe that such faith conduces much, both to good conduct and to happiness. To our neighbours, who have faith in God and are sincere members of existing churches, we have not much to say. They are doubtless trying to learn and do what is right in the sight of God, according to their lights. We would appeal to them, however, to be as charitably disposed to us and to each other as we are to them. Let them remember that the most that they can say for themselves is that they have tried sincerely to learn and to do what is right in the sight of God, according to their circumstances and capacities; and that they ought, therefore, to feel sympathy and respect for all others who can say the same, whatever their religious convictions may be.

We have, however, something to say to our neighbours, who are not sincere members of any existing church. We appeal to them to join us and become sincere members of our church. We preach faith in God, and belief in the immortality of man, and the judgment of men by God, as firmly as any of our neighbours; but we do not preach that God judges men according as they adhere to this or that church, or profess this or that creed; but we believe that He makes allowance for the education, the surroundings, the dispositions, and the capacities of all, and judges them according as, with such allowance, they are found to have tried sincerely to learn and to do what is right in His sight.

We do not preach that only two sentences are to be found in the Divine Book of judgments, eternal bliss and eternal torture; but we preach that all will be treated with justice according to their deserts. We do not base our faith on any supernatural events alleged to have occurred long ago, but on the purely scientific ground that it is reasonable to have faith in the Power, which has made us the wonderful beings, which we feel ourselves to be, and placed us in the wonderful world and in the wonderful Universe, in which we find ourselves placed.

We do not preach that all the contents of the Bible are inspired by God, and that all other literature is uninspired. We find that there are things in the Bible which are bad or false, as well as things which are good and true; and that there are many things which are good and true in other literature also. We try to select and adopt all that is best, wherever it may be found; and we admit perfect freedom of criticism.

We preach that there is not any devil. We think that belief in a devil impugns the power of God, if He cannot prevent such a rival being from existing; and His goodness, if He will not prevent it.

We preach that Jesus Christ was a man, who felt that the religion of his nation required to be reformed, and saw that it was possible to express it in such a manner as to make it capable of spreading over the civilized world; and that he preached his faith accordingly, although he felt sure that he would be put to death for it. And when we see such an instance of a man leading a godly life and suffering an early cruel death, the conviction rushes upon us that death could not have been the end of all things with him; but that his spirit survived death, and so will all our spirits.

We take Reason for our guide in all things. We believe that God is perfectly reasonable, and we think that He has not given us any arbitrary commands whatever, either to hold any special opinions, or to conform to any special rites, or to observe any special days.

We think that the observance of a weekly day of rest, and the practice of attending religious services on that day, are very good human institutions, but that they may very properly be modified at times and in places, and adapted everywhere to human needs.

The new Unitarian movements at Wimbledon, Harlesden, and Finchley are very promising. In 2 and 3 a Congregational Committee has been elected, and at Finchley a permanent building is about to be acquired.

The new and interesting development in Unitarian Church organisation, copied from Wesleyanism, The Circuit,—has its first exemplification in the Manchester District, where it is now decided to work four churches under two ministers, the Rev. Charles Peach and another, with the assistance of supply preachers. The four churches are Upper Brook Street, Chorlton, Broughton, and Urmston. A special consecration service and united soiree was held on Saturday, December 18th, to celebrate the initiation of this Manchester "First Circuit," the Rev. Joseph Wood, of Birmingham, being the preacher.

At Douglas, I.-O.-M., Thursday, December 9th, the Rev. T. P. Spedding gave the third lecture of the series arranged by the Missionary Conference, subject being "Theological Christ, or Human Jesus"; owing to a storm of wind and rain an audience was scarcely expected, but 46 adults came and heard a lecture which was described as a remarkable effort. A few questions followed.

It was in the vestry of the old Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church, Cork, that Father Matthew, the Roman Catholic apostle of Temperance, took the total abstinence pledge.

Jesus—a Man, and not God

(Continued).

Col. i., 15-17: Christ "is the image of the invisible God," as man is also (Genesis i., 27; v., 1; ix., 9; and I. Corinthians xi., 7) "the image and glory of God"; and if the image of the invisible God, he cannot himself be the invisible God of whom he is the image. But the writer goes on to speak of Christ as "the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; he is before all things, and in him all things consist." The "creation" here spoken of is the spiritual creation in Christ: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (or, "there is a new creation"—Margin R.V.); "In Christ Jesus" neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth, "but a new creature" ("creation"—margin); "We are his workmanship—created in Christ Jesus" (II. Cor. v., 17; Gal. vi., 15; Eph. ii., 10).

In this new spiritual creation Christ was "the first-born," "the first-born among many brethren" (Romans viii., 29); "the first-born from the dead" (Col. i., 18). He led the way in this new dispensation, and in him—in Christ—"were all (spiritual) things created in the heavens and upon earth"—all things belonging to this new dispensation, both in those Christians who have risen beyond the grave into the heavens, and in those Christians upon earth—"things visible"—spiritual power works visible results—"and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all (these spiritual) things have been created through" Christ, "and for him; and he is before all (these) things (created through him), and in him all (these) things consist (hold together.)" Manifestly this is a spiritual and not a material creation. It refers to the great results flowing from the preaching of the Gospel in the name of Christ—"the bringing in of the Gentiles and the subjugation of the powers of this world beneath the authority of the Cross." Christ is here, as Dr. Vance Smith has pointed out, the instrument of Divine power, the representative of God and not God himself.

Hebrews i., 8-10: "Of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." This is a quotation from Psalm 45 (6), which is a nuptial ode in celebration of the marriage of a Jewish prince and may be translated: "Thy throne is the throne of God for ever and ever" (R.V., margin), and therefore this is not correctly referred to Christ by the writer of Hebrews. And even that writer cannot mean to speak of the Son as real God, for he himself immediately adds: "Therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows"—"thy fellows" cannot mean Gods, but must signify men. Verse 10 has no reference to Jesus, but is a quotation from a Psalm referring to God himself—the one God of the Jews; they had never heard of Jesus when the Psalmist wrote the words (Psalm 102, 25-27).

It is evident that there is no confirmation in any of these texts that the doctrine of the Deity of Christ was any part of Bible Christianity. And suppose the Bible really did say that Jesus was Almighty God, would that be a proof of its truth? The Bible says that God was seen in form like a man; that the sun was made to stand still so that it hasted not to go down for a whole day (Joshua x., 13); but it does not follow that because these statements are in the Bible they are therefore true. If the Bible says that no man hath seen God, and yet declares that men have seen God, one of these statements cannot be true, for of two contradictory assertions one must be false—in the Bible or anywhere else. The Bible must be judged by human reason.

So when our correspondent quotes the Koran to the effect that Jesus is the Word of God and the Spirit of God—which Unitarians, like Mohammed, did not deny, and which modern Unitarians do not deny—he must not suppose that if the Koran asserts that Jesus is God—which it does not—that such would be any proof of the truth of the assertion. But our correspondent, who professes that he desires "nothing but to know the truth," omits to quote the Koran to the effect that: "Christ the son of Mary is no more than an apostle"; they are infidels who say, verily, God is Christ the son of Mary"; "They are certainly infidels who say, God is the third of three."

While orthodox Christians rest their doctrines upon texts, Unitarian Christians can meet them on their own ground, and show that the Bible does not teach that Jesus was God.

Literature.

"The Origin and Character of the Bible, and its place among Sacred Books," by J. T. Sunderland, M.A., 3/6 net. Philip Green, 5, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.

"This volume in its present form is in a sense an evolution. The beginning of the evolution was a small book less than one half the size of the present work, entitled 'What is the Bible?' This met with so much public favour that it soon seemed best to re-write and enlarge it, thus making it much wider in its scope. The result was the first edition of 'The Bible: Its Origin, Growth, and Character, and Its place among the Sacred Books of the World.' The present volume is that work carefully revised throughout and still further enlarged, and in every particular brought up to date, so as to embody the results of the best and latest Biblical scholarship."

Admittedly, Mr. Sunderland has done his work thoroughly well. The book, of little more than 300 pages, is a veritable library in itself, or, as it is more exactly stated, "a library boiled down." It summarises in clear and simple language the results

of Biblical scholarship in a way ready to hand for the student or reader, furnishing information for which otherwise he would have to consult quite a numerous list of other works to find. As a text-book on the Bible it undoubtedly holds a unique place, for there is no other book so serviceable.

The volume contains 27 chapters covering almost every subject of critical interest concerning the the Bible; also valuable tables and charts indicating dates of origin of the various Scriptural books, and dates of important Biblical and other historical events. Mr. Sunderland deals with his subject on a strictly scientific, evolutionary, and historical method, with the sole aim to get at the truth concerning every problem involved. And the spirit and temper in which the book is written may be seen by the following quotation, describing the Bible as the "history of a moral and religious development, the most remarkable of which we have any knowledge, carried on on the scale of a whole nation, extending not through a single generation only, but through forty generations—a period of time as long as from Charlemagne to the present day—and presenting with photographic exactness every phase of individual and national progress from the crude child-state to a rich maturity. It is this that makes the Bible so living, so fresh, so inexhaustible, so full of interest and power—a world-book as no other volume, sacred or profane, is" (pp. 239-40). The author combines reverence with the spirit of research. To ministers, Sunday School teachers, to parents, and all theological students who read it the book is certain to be an invaluable mine of information. We urge our readers to possess a copy for themselves. Such a book as this in every household and read, would be a marvellous education in itself, and would revolutionise the religious thought of the whole Christian world. Every effort to promote its distribution is effective for the emancipation of humanity from theological slavery into the freedom of reasonable religion. No truth-seeker can read it without being thankful to Mr. Sunderland for the great help which is here made so easily available.

"Unitarian Affirmations," Six Lectures by R. Travers Herford, B.A.; Second Edition, 1/6 net. British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, London, W.C.

"The Apostolic Age," by E. von Dobschütz, Professor of Theology in the University of Strassburg; translated by F. L. Pogson, M.A.; 2/- net. Philip Green, 5, Essex Street, London, W.C.

In Mr. Herford's lectures we have a very plain and helpful statement of the Unitarianism as to belief about God, Jesus, The Bible, The Church, The Future Life, and as regards Faith and Freedom. Mr. Herford reveals himself as a true typical instance of the Unitarian attitude. Anyone reading this book could not fail to get a very real understanding of what Unitarian Christianity is. Proved scholar as Mr. Herford is, he uses no difficult phraseology and aims at clear and simple expression with a success that is certainly gratifying to hearers or readers. It appears that the first edition of this book has been found useful as a class-book, and it is very desirable that such a book should become more widely used in that and in other ways. Mr. Herford is delightfully frank and fair and straight: "I do not apologise for being a Unitarian. I do not defend it. I glory in it."

"I shall speak solely for myself, and tell you what an average Unitarian thinks about religion. If you find it good and true, it is well. If not, then thank God that you have learnt something better."

In a book particularly free from defects or errors, no doubt "minds" in the sentence (Intro. viii.) "I do not wish to unsettle the minds of anyone," should be "mind." It is gratifying to know that a second edition of these lectures is called for, and the publishers are doing themselves justice in issuing it.

The volume on "The Apostolic Age" in an Introduction, followed by three chapters, consisting as a whole of 140 pages, makes no pretension to being an exhaustive treatment of the subject, but is a very fair and rational attempt to present a true view of facts and conditions so far as at present they are known.

As a general introduction to the study of the earliest period of Christian history, in a comparatively brief form, such a book as this is of no mean service in helping towards an unprejudiced view to begin with, and in giving the reader the right attitude of mind for any further investigation. "Christianity in the Jewish World," "Christianity in the Græco-Roman World," and "Christianity in the Post-Apostolic Age" are the three divisions of treatment. At the end there is a good Bibliography.

"Hope Street Church, Liverpool, and the Allied Nonconformity," by H. D. Roberts. 6/6 net. The Liverpool Booksellers' Co., Ltd.

Mr. Roberts has produced a fairly bulky volume, including a mass of collected material concerning the history of the congregation worshipping (1) in X Meeting, 1687; (2) Kaye Street Meeting, 1707; (3) Paradise Street Chapel, 1791; and (4) Hope Street Church, 1849, onwards. The book was intended as a Bi-centenary History (1707-1907), and is confessedly two years overdue for reasons explained. It is an important contribution to the history of Nonconformity and of Unitarian Dissent in particular. Mr. Roberts quite modestly neglects to state on his title page that he is also the author of a history of Matthew Henry's Chapel at Chester. His investigations into the origins of his Hope Street Congregation in the supposed "X meeting" are both interesting and informing. There is much necessarily about ministers, including James Martineau, Charles Wicksteed, and Richard A. Armstrong. The book must have entailed an enormous amount of research and labour. There is a detailed Index at the end, and the volume contains some good portraits and other illustrations.

Home Circle.

THE NEW YEAR.

You must wake and call me early,
Call me early, mother dear;
To-morrow will be the happiest time
Of all the glad New Year;
Of all the glad New Year, mother,
The maddest, merriest day.
—Tennyson.

Frances E. Cooke has reminded us that there is a thought for us all with which we might greet the New Year, and it is this:—

"There is one work which no one, not even God Himself, can do for us—this work is the building up of a noble character within ourselves." Longfellow in his "Builders" tells us that our future depends much upon ourselves.

"All are architects of fate
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.
For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays,
Are the blocks with which we build."
—Longfellow.

How to be happy—to make the New Year happy—what is the secret? Another American tells us that "the place to be happy is here; the time to be happy is now; and the way to be happy is to make other people happy."

Speak a shade more kindly
Than the year before.
Pray a little oftener,
Love a little more;
Cling a little closer
To the Father's love,
So life below shall liker grow
To the life above.

MAKING OTHERS HAPPY.

Cobbler Martin lived in a town cellar, and lived a lonely and selfish life. An old friend called to see him, and Martin said he was very lonely and would be glad to die.

"You should live for God, Martin, then you would cease to be lonely, and all would seem easy to you. Christ taught us how to live for God. Can you read? Buy the Gospels and read them, and they will show your how."

Martin bought the Gospels in large print and read them every night when his work was done. One evening he read of the rich Pharisee in Luke vii.

"Ah!" said Martin to himself, "just such a Pharisee as I am; he cared only for himself. If the Lord came to visit me, should I do the same?"

And in his sleep he dreamed that a voice came to him: "Martin, look into the street to-morrow, I will come."

Next morning his mind was full of his dream. People passed as he worked, and an old soldier named Stephen began to clear away the snow in the street.

Stephen lived on the few pence earned by odd jobs he did. His boots were worn out. Martin looked out from his cobbling and saw Stephen pausing to try and warm himself. He was very old and seemed too feeble to shovel the snow. So Martin opened the door and called out: "Come in and warm yourself. You must be frozen."

"God bless you," said Stephen, "it's true, my bones are aching." Martin made him some tea and insisted on him drinking it; but every now and then glanced at the window.

"Are you expecting anyone?" asked his guest. "Well, I can't say I am really expecting anyone; but a word has fallen into my heart."

And he told Stephen of his reading, and of the dream, and how Christ said we were all to love and help one another. Stephen listened, and tears rolled down his face.

Stephen rose to go and said: "You've fed and comforted my body and soul."

"Quite welcome," said Martin. "Come again. I'm always glad to have a guest."

Other people passed. A poor woman paused near his window trying to shield and comfort a crying babe. She was poorly dressed, and the babe was cold. Martin opened the door and brought her in, and gave her some soup made for his own dinner. The woman told him her trouble and that she had just pawned her shawl for fivepence. Martin opened his cupboard, brought out an old jacket and said: "See, it is not very good, but it will do to wrap up the little one."

"God bless you; the child would have been frozen," said she, "surely it must have been Christ that bade you look out of the window and pity me."

Martin smiled and said: "Yes, he did tell me. Take this for Christ's sake,"—and he gave her fivepence. "Now go and get your shawl."

Martin went on with his cobbling, and kept a watch on the window. Two more people in trouble were comforted by him. And at night when he read in the Gospels the words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," he was filled with gladness, and understood that his dream had come true and that Christ had come to him and received a welcome.

Martin became happy by making others happy. That is the secret of any happy year.

And in so doing he was doing in himself what no other could do for him; he was building up a noble character within.

Religious Instruction in the Sunday School.

By the Rev. Dr. WILLIAM GRIFFITHS.

The Sunday School is not an institution for providing a pleasant Sunday afternoon, or week-evening entertainments. It is a school carried on for the purpose of giving instruction. Moreover, it is a SUNDAY School. It is the Church of the young. The youthful members are to be trained and developed through religious and ethical teaching.

In common with the other churches around us we stand for heart-religion, at the same time we stand for a different theology from theirs. Let us not shrink from explaining and emphasising our distinctive ideas to the young who are under our care. Some in our own circles are for keeping back all teaching on religion until the scholars have grown up. They dread the very word "doctrine," and they desire to protect the scholars' minds from what they deem to be the infection of doctrines. Is there any form of religion which does not involve doctrine? Every intelligent believer in the simplest form of the Christian religion must have some doctrine—I do not say dogma. Is it the right policy, therefore, to withhold from the scholars everything that partakes of a doctrinal nature?

If children are allowed to grow up without adequate grasp of religious beliefs the probability is that they will not take much interest in them when they shall have attained manhood. Let them, at least, be made familiar with the career of the Founder of our religion, with the main lines of his teaching, with the rise of the Christian Movement, with its rapid growth and broadening out under the influence of the great missionary Paul. Let them be instructed about the struggle for religious freedom in our own country, and be nurtured in the principles and ideals which are cherished in our group of churches.

Even children of tender years are capable of grasping the elements of Christian truth if set forth with simplicity and clearness. It is sometimes said that attention cannot be secured for religious topics, and that a teacher who would persist in giving such lessons would find that a considerable proportion of the scholars would drop off. If such be the case it is deplorable, but it is not a sufficient reason for leaving the task alone. Surely the scholars are not the proper judges as to what the instruction ought to be, more than the scholars of a Municipal School should be allowed to choose their subjects.

It is evident that the Sunday School has entered a fresh stage in its development. Our business is far more important than that the scholars be supplied with nice tales and anecdotes, and have a good time. Our chief business consists rather in feeding their hopes and aspirations on the noblest ideals; in training them in reverence, sympathy, and service, in guiding them to the heights of life—where they may breathe the pure air of religion, and gain a spiritual outlook on life.

Modern Unitarianism.

By the Rev. CHARLES E. STOWE.

Modern Unitarianism, as its literature shows, is not a set of opinions, a creed, or a ritual form; but an attitude of mind, a spirit.

To be a Unitarian it is not demanded that one should have the truth, but the spirit of truth. It is not the particular dogmas held, but the spirit in which they are held that makes the Unitarian. Consequently, no statement of theological opinions is demanded on the part of a Unitarian minister. For the moment such a demand were made the body would forsake the vital principle of Unitarianism and become orthodox. "What do Unitarians believe?" is often asked derisively by those who cannot conceive a creedless faith. Unitarians believe that the spirit of truth is far more important than any merely human attempts to formulate truth. That

> "They must upward still and onward
> Who would keep abreast of truth."

"Give us this day our daily bread!" This is a true Unitarian prayer. "Give us day by day the truth that belongs to the day," not the truth of yesterday. Truth is like the manna on which Israel fed of old: it spoils if kept. It falls fresh from heaven each day. It is permanent and progressive. Truth is not static, but dynamic. It is always becoming, so we can never say "It is!"

The follies of orthodoxy come from trying to coop God up in a book or a creed, and then taking a heresy-mop to the overflow. God is too big for the coop and the mop! So is truth.

The orthodox churches are full of Unitarians who are Unitarians in everything but the name. It would scare them out of their wits to be told in so many words, "You are a Unitarian!"

People feel that it is a disgrace to be called a Unitarian, even when you are one! There is a story told of the great David Hume that is to the point in this connection. He had a housekeeper named Nancy, who dearly loved him, for he was very lovable; and she took it very much to heart that he stood in such bad odour with his neighbours as a reputed infidel. One night some local wits nailed a sign to his gate on which was inscribed: "Saint David," intended, doubtless, to hold his well-known lack of orthodoxy up to public shame. At least Nancy took it so, and wept and wrung her hands in despair. Hume was not inclined to take the matter seriously, but exclaimed: "Don't cry, Nancy! I'm not the first good man who's been called a saint! It's no disgrace."

So what harm if someone calls you a Unitarian? Some of the best people who have lived have been called Unitarians, and what mortal harm did it ever do them?

—(From "The Christian Register," U.S.A.).

The British League of Unitarian Women.

(Information from the Secretaries: Miss Helen Brooke Herford, 1a, Christ Church Road, Hampstead, London, N.W.; or Miss Violet Preston, 9, Ladbroke Gardens, London, W.)

At the recent meeting of the Council and friends of the League, held at Essex Hall, London, there were reports from several branches in existence from which the following information will be of interest.

At Peckham the branch raised £70 in the spring towards church expenses, and is now directing its efforts in aid of a Sale and Exhibition in connection with the Sunday School. At Ilminster efforts are being made for an organ fund; Stourbridge has sent contributions to the John Pounds' Home at Portsmouth, and also to the church at Newport, and has a Study Class for Dr. Brooke Herford's "Story of Religion in England"; Hampstead has added a bookstall in the chapel porch under a Publications' Committee, converted a neglected piece of chapel ground into a pleasant garden for aged people from an adjoining Convalescent Home to sit in and chat, sent hampers of dainties fortnightly for invalids at two Missions, contributed a box of goods to a Sale of Work of another church (Clarence Road), and is about to re-decorate and make habitable an unused room as a church parlour.

The Bridport branch, mostly working women, have organised an entertainment to defray cost of the Church Calendar; Todmorden has raised, by entertainments, £2 for a Benevolent Fund, and £8 for the funds of the East Lancashire Unitarian Mission, organised a series of social evenings, and a Conference of Sunday School Workers of all denominations to hear Mrs. Crompton's address on "The Worth of a Woman"; this branch having 119 members, mostly working women.

Pontypridd, recently started, has sent a parcel of garments to the John Pounds' Home, and makes garments to order. The Associate League of Liverpool, which represents the Liverpool Churches, has held discussion meetings, and intends holding a Housewives' Fair. Richmond organised lectures on social subjects, and has contributed to charities; Southport, with 54 members, has established a Sewing Society, and held a successful Sale of Work and contributed to the funds of the Liverpool District Missionary Association, and to those of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

These are some of the things done for our churches by Unitarian women.

The League Committee has suggested that the London branches should undertake the duties of finding hostesses for the ministers and delegates to the Whit-week meetings.

It is suggested, too, that the League should keep in touch with young girls who leave our Sunday Schools to enter business or service in other places, and with young women who come up to school or college or business life in London. This is very important, for up to now these young people have mostly been lost sight of.

Postal Mission Notes.

By Miss FLORENCE HILL, Hon. Sec., Central Postal Mission & Unitarian Workers' Union.

Local Societies Affiliated, and Secretaries:

Postal Missions:

Eastern Union—Miss S. S. Dowson, Geldstone, Beccles, Suffolk.
Irish Unitarian Christian Society—Rev. G. Vance.
Manchester—Mrs. Noel Johnson, Rhuallan, Warwick Road, Hale, Cheshire.
Scottish—Rev. E. T. Russell, 304, Morningside Road, Edinburgh.
N. Midland—Miss Beatrice Squirrell. Lynton, Stoneygate, Leicester.
South Wales—Mrs. Lewis, Tophill, Pontypridd.
Swansea—Mrs. Reid, The Knoll, Swansea
Western Union—Miss Barmby, Mount Pleasant, Sidmouth.
Yorkshire Union—Mrs. Oliver Lupton, Sunnymead, Shire Oak Road, Headingley, Leeds.

We are glad to be able to put at the head of this column a list of some of the Postal Missions associated in the distribution of religious literature and the propagation of Unitarian thought. Any of the secretaries will be pleased to send pamphlets and books and to enter into correspondence with inquirers.

In reviewing the work of the past year, we feel there is much to be thankful for. Truly as the late W. J. Fox said years ago, "all the forces that tend to educate and civilize, work in favour of the Unitarian religion." People certainly now are far more ready to consider with an open mind religious problems, the popular prejudice against Unitarianism is beginning to die out, but we ought not to be satisfied with mere toleration, we ought not to rest till we can kindle a genuine enthusiasm for our pure and lofty faith, and free it from the stigma of "coldness" which has been so unjustly attributed to it. One way to bring this about is to make known the deep underlying principles as expounded by our great thinkers. Every book that goes out from the Postal Mission libraries is a silent but powerful messenger in this direction. We find that the books by M. J. Savage appeal very strongly to many. Only the other day a congregationalist in returning a volume of Savage's sermons wrote —"I enjoyed the sermons immensely, and have lent the book to many friends. Now a young Atheist has it; I think he is more set against orthodox Christianity and the worship of an infallible Bible than against real religion. I want to lend the book to more friends, and should like another work by Savage."

Through the kindness of the editor of Unity the Central Postal Mission Committee is able to send two dozen copies of the Unitarian Monthly to Mr. Ethelred Brown, of Montego Bay, Jamaica. He is leader of a little group of Unitarian converts, all coloured men, who have formed a Lay Centre, and who at present meet for worship in his private house. Mr. Brown has come from the Methodists, he is making great sacrifices for the Unitarian cause, and hopes soon to go to Meadville College to train for the ministry. The Central Postal Mission Committee are sending books to Montego Bay to form the nucleus of a theological lending library.

The National Unitarian Temperance Association.

TO ABSTAINERS.—AN APPEAL.

The Association's war chest contains little—too little. It's receipts come from a band of 209 sympathisers in all parts of the country and from the officials of 64 Temperance Societies and Bands of Hope. There must be an enormous number who would help by subscription and service the extension of the association's work—a number whose eyes never see the admirable and extensive range of appeals issued in pamphlets and letters. And what is its work? Here is one phase—here is an appeal issued by the Presidents of the Sunday School Association and the N.U.T.A. It was sent to over 3,000 Sunday School teachers. On the threshold of a New Year it would surely be a good thing if that membership roll were increased by one name—yours.

Dear Friends,— "Naworth Castle, Carlisle.

The work of Sunday School Teachers is to inculcate general principles, acting on which life may be more purely and earnestly expressed, but this work has been sadly hindered by social customs and especially by the physical and moral ills caused by drink, and it is surely desirable to teach your young friends the nature and effects of alcoholic liquors. If such instruction is neglected much of the result of all your labour may be destroyed in later years through ignorance of the influence of alcohol on the body and even more on the mind of man. Connected with your Sunday School we trust there is a Band of Hope. If so, such instruction will find a place there. There are, however, less than 100 Bands of Hope connected with over 300 of our Sunday schools and many thousands of children may miss such important lessons if they are not given in the Sunday school itself. Once a month in the "Band of Hope Chronicle" a "World's Band of Hope Lesson" is given. This lesson is taught monthly in many Unitarian Sunday Schools already; it is based on the syllabus of lessons issued by the Board of Education, 1909. Such a lesson need not in any way interfere with the course you are following in your school; it may be considered as part of the general scheme for the year and a regular Sunday allotted to it. Children thus taught may make mistakes, but surely fewer than if they were not warned of the danger. With the New Year we trust you will take the opportunity of placing such teaching on the list of lessons to be given in your Sunday School. We wish your work abundant success and trust you will have the satisfaction of feeling its usefulness. May you enter the New Year with earnest resolve to promote that righteousness which exalteth a nation and brings nearer the time of establishing God's Kingdom on earth.—Yours sincerely,

CARLISLE,
President of the National Unitarian Temperance Association.
HOWARD YOUNG,
President of the Sunday School Association.

December, 1909.

Notes and News.

RECEIVED: "The Cartoscript Method of Class Teaching, with Questions and Answers on Religious and Kindred Subjects," written and compiled by Bertram Talbot. 6d. net. Robert Head, Publisher, High Street, Congleton.

With this issue we begin Vol. VII. It is encouraging to know that "Unity"—our "Unitarian Monthly"—meets with increasing favour and appreciation. It has been no small matter one man bearing the financial responsibility of this venture unaided and alone. He could not have done it had it not been that the paper from the commencement succeeded in winning sufficient support to enable the proprietor to pay the cost of production and publication. The sales have paid expenses. The Editor thanks his clients and contributors for their co-operation.

A minister wrote recently to the Editor as follows:—"I had no idea that you had taken all the burden on yourself. We—your brother ministers—ought all to know of this, and so loyally help you with your monthly, by asking our congregations to take copies."

The Editor did not have any copies of Vol. V. (1908) bound up a year ago. He proposes now to have have Vols. V. and VI. (1908 and 1909) bound together with a detailed Index in paper covers at 1/6 net to purchasers. There will be only a few copies. Orders should be sent without delay.

The women are finding out that there are many varieties of work for our churches waiting to be done by them, and that by organisation they can render effective help in matters which can either be attended to by women only or by them most suitably.

It is important that women's societies of every church in our connexion should be affiliated to the Women's League and profit from the experience of its various branches. The organising secretary will be glad to pay a visit to any church in order to promote this movement.

At the Council Meeting (half-yearly) of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, it was reported that the recent season of the Van Mission work reached audiences aggregating a total of 191,980 people, the lowest figure for the four vans in any one week was 5,205 hearers, and the highest 13,120; and that Mrs. Bayle Bernard, the donor of the first Van, has contributed £150 towards the work for 1910.

Sir John Brunner, Bart., is retiring from Parliament.

The Bolton District Sunday School Union held its annual meeting on Saturday, November 20th, at Atherton, with upwards of 160 persons.

Dob Lane Chapel, Failsworth, Manchester, Minister, Rev. J. Morley Mills, has 256 registered members and 72 subscribers to the envelope offertory.

Mrs. W. T. Davies, M.A., wife of Rev. W. T. Davies, of Wakefield, is an addition to our list of women preachers.

The N. and E. Lancashire Unitarian Mission (Association of Churches) has celebrated its Jubilee at Bury on Saturday, December 4th, by a special service and meeting, and by the issue of a Jubilee volume, history of the Mission and its 32 affiliated churches.

PULPIT CHANGES: Rev. John Moore concluded his ministry at Hindley, Nov. 28th; Rev. Lawrence Clare, late of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, Manchester, has entered upon the Unitarian ministry at Peckham, Dec. 5th, inducted Dec. 4th; Rev. W. R. Clark Lewis, has received public recognition as the new minister at Gainsborough, Nov. 27th; Rev. Stanley A. Mellor, B.A., Ph.D., was inducted to the Unitarian ministry at Rotherham (Church of Our Father) Dec. 4th; Rev. A. G. Peaston, of Barnard Castle, appointed to Spain Lane Chapel, Boston, to commence in February.

DEATHS: Miss Elizabeth Pearson, Swinton, Manchester, Nov. 13th, 58; Mr. Thomas Rushworth, Southport, Nov. 10th, 69; Mrs. Thomas Brettell, Quarry Bank, Staffs, Nov. 18th, 77; Mrs. Joseph Johnson, of Wakefield, at Moss Side, Manchester, Nov. 20th, 73; Rev. James E. Stead, suddenly, at Stalybridge, Nov. 27th, 55; Mr. Jas. Aldred, Ainsworth, Bolton, interred Nov. 30th, 76; Mrs. Elizebeth Wade, Ilford, Nov. 25th; Miss Sarah Titford, Hornsey, Dec. 6th, 83; Mr. Sydney Blake Jolly, M.B., Sydenham, Dec. 10th, 51; Miss Alice Hincks, Clifton, Dec. 12th; Mr. Alderman R. F. Martineau, Birmingham, Dec. 15th, 78

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UNITARIAN ORGANISATIONS, Etc.

The British & Foreign Unitarian Association.

Headquarters and Bookroom:
Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.
Annual Business Meetings: Whit-week.
Secretary: Rev. W. Copeland Bowie.

Founded 1825. It is the chief missionary organisation of the Unitarian Churches of Great Britain and Ireland. It originated as a representative Association, and at the present time it is supported by annual contributions from 244 churches, from some District Associations, and from individual subscribers, delegates from churches being invited to its annual business meeting and voting. It supports missionary work at home and abroad by grants in aid of stipends to ministers and missionaries, by co-operation with District Associations, by grants to assist churches, by the publication of books and tracts illustrative of Unitarian Christianity, and by grants of tracts freely made to individual inquirers, congregations, missionary societies, and postal missions; and its work includes the safeguarding of the civil and religious rights of Unitarians.—Catalogue of publications sent to applicants. Correspondence: Address to Secretary. Contributions to Treasurer: Mr. H. Chatfield Clarke.

The National Triennial Conference of Unitarian and Kindred Congregations.

Secretary: Rev. J. Harwood, B.A., 105, Palace Road, Tulse Hill Park, London, S.W.

Originated by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association 1881, for religious fellowship and conference. First Conference at Liverpool 1882, followed by others at Birmingham 1885, Leeds 1888, London 1891, Manchester 1894, Sheffield 1897, Leicester 1900, Liverpool 1903, Oxford 1906, Bolton 1909,—always held in April.

The Ministers' Sustentation Fund, the Ministers' Pension and Insurance Fund, the Guilds' Union, the Social Service Union, originated from discussions of the Conference. The Conference is a representative body. It is supported financially by 145 churches, 8 District Societies, and some individual subscribers; but all Unitarian Churches are on its roll and can send delegates to its meetings, and they, along with the ministers, decide by vote its matters of business.

Central Postal Mission and Unitarian Workers' Union.

Hon Secretary: Miss Florence Hill, 36, Heath Street, Hampstead, London, N.W.

Spreads information about Unitarianism by correspondence and distribution of literature through the post, and by various other means; promotes Postal Missions and affiliates them together, and assists other missionary work. There are thirteen district postal missions affiliated, and several Unitarian reading circles. List of names and addresses of secretaries can be had from Miss Hill.

The British League of Unitarian Women.

Established 1908. Secretaries: Miss Helen Brooke Herford, 1a, Christchurch Road, Hampstead, London, N.W., and Miss Violet Preston, 9, Ladbroke Gardens, London, W. Objects: To assist churches, and the denomination generally, in promotion of religious life and missionary activity, to bring Unitarian women into closer co-operation and fellowship, and to form local branches.

The Sunday School Association.

Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.
Hon. Secretary: Mr. Ion Pritchard.

Founded 1833. Promotes Sunday School education generally, and publishes religious books for Sunday Schools and young people. District Sunday School Associations of Unitarian Sunday Schools, and most Unitarian Sunday Schools are affiliated to it, and can be represented at its annual business meetings in Whit-week. Bookroom and office hours, 9 till 6; Saturdays, 9 till 2. Catalogue of publications and list of reward and gift books sent post free on application to Mr. B. C. Hare, Essex Hall.

The Guilds' Union.

Inaugurated 1901. Promotes Guilds and Religious Societies for Young People of Unitarian Congregations and Sunday Schools. Secretary: Rev. C. M. Wright, M.A., Heather Brae, Atkinson Road, Ashton-on-Mersey, Sale, Manchester.

The National Unitarian Temperance Association.

Established 1893. Promotes the Temperance Movement in connection with Unitarian Churches and Sunday Schools, and the formation of Bands of Hope and Temperance Societies amongst them, and seeks to affiliate them. Hon. Secretaries: J. Bredall, F.R.G.S., 3, Birdhurst Road, South Croydon, and A. W. Harris, 53, Lowden Road, Herne Hill, London, S.E. Organising Secretary: W. R. Marshall, 31, Birkhall Road, Catford, London, S.E.

The Social Service Union.

Founded by the National Conference, 1906. Secretaries: Miss Catherine Gittins, 6, Salisbury Rd., Leicester, and Rev. R. P. Farley, B.A., 11, Algernon Road, Kilburn, London, N.W. It seeks to arouse interest of Unitarian and Kindred Churches in the study of pressing social problems, and promotes practical efforts towards their solution.

UNITARIAN PERIODICALS: The Inquirer, 1d. weekly, 3, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.; The Christian Life and Unitarian Herald, 1d. weekly, 5, Fetter Lane, London, E.C.; The Unitarian Monthly 1d., Parsonage, Hyde-road, Mottram, Manchester; Young Days, 1d. monthly—a magazine for children,—Sunday School Association; The Essex Hall Year Book, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, 1s.

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— OR —
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